

THE
LYLAR.
A
COMEDY
IN THREE ACTS.

As it is Performed at the
THEATRE in the HAY-MARKET.

BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. LOWNDES, J. RIVINGTON and Sons,
And S. BLADON, in PATER-NOSTER-ROW,

M DCCLXXXVI.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]



As it is found in the

THEATRE in the Hay-Market

By SAMUEL JOHNSON

J. O. M. D. C. C. L. X. V.

Printed by W. Lowndes, J. Rivington, and Sons

in Pall-mall, near the Theatre

MDCCLXXV

[The O. M. D. C. C. L. X. V.]

PROLOGUE.

WHAT various revolutions in our art,
Since Thespis first sung ballads in a cart !
By nature fram'd the witty war to wage,
And lay the deep foundations of the stage,
From his own soil that bard his pictures drew :
The gaping crowd the mimic features knew,
And the broad jest with fire electric flew.
Succeeding times, more polish'd and refin'd.
To rigid rules the comic muse confin'd :
Robb'd of the nat'ral freedom of her song,
In artful measures now she floats along ;
No sprightly sallies rouse the slumb'ring pit ;
Thalia, grown mere architect in wit,
To doors and ladders has confin'd her cares,
Convenient closets, and a snug back stairs ;
'Twixt her and Satire has dissolv'd the league,
And jilted humour to enjoy intrigue.
To gain the suffrage of this polish'd age,
We bring to-night a stranger on the stage :
His sire De Vega ; we confess this truth,
Lest you mistake him for a British youth.
Severe the censure on my feeble pen,
Neglecting manners, that she copies men :
Thus, if I hum or ha, or name report,
'Tis Serjeant Splitcause from the Inns of Court ;
If, at the age that ladies cease to dance,
To romp at Ranelagh, or read romance,
I draw a dowager inclin'd to man,
Or paint her rage for china or japan,
The true original is quickly known,
And lady Squab proclaim'd throughout the town.
But in the following group let no man dare
To claim a limb, nay, not a single hair :
What gallant Briton can be such a sot
To own the child a Spaniard has begot.

Dramatis Personæ.

SIR JAMES ELLIOT,	Mr. <i>R. Palmer.</i>
OLD WILDING, the Father,	Mr. <i>Fearon.</i>
YOUNG WILDING,	Mr. <i>Palmer.</i>
PAPILLION,	Mr. <i>Baddeley.</i>

MISS GRANTAM,	Mrs. <i>Hitchcock.</i>
MISS GODFREY,	Miss <i>Platt.</i>
KITTY, the Maid,	Mrs. <i>Pouffin.</i>

The Servants.

T H E
L Y A R.

A C T I.

S C E N E a Lodging.

YOUNG WILDING and PAPILLION discovered.

Young Wilding.

AND I am now, Papillion, perfectly
equipped?

Papillion. Personne mieux. Nobody
better.

Y. Wild. My figure?

Pap. Fait a peindre.

Y. Wild. My air?

Pap. Libre.

Y. Wild. My address?

Pap. Parisienne.

Y. Wild. My hat fits easily under my arm;
not like the draggled tail of my tatter'd acade-
mical habit.

Pap. Ah, bein autre chose.

Y. Wild. Why then adieu, Alma Mater, and
bien venue, la ville de Londre; farewell to the
schools, and welcome the theatres; presidents,
proctors, short commons with long graces, must
now give place to plays, bagnios, long tavern-
bills with no graces at all.

Pap.

Pap. Ah, bravo, bravo!

Y. Wild. Well, but my dear Papillion, you must give me the chart du paye: This town is a new world to me; my provident papa, you know would never suffer me near the smoak of London; and what can be his motive for permitting me now, I can't readily conceive.

Pap. Ni moi.

Y. Wild. I shall, however, take the liberty to conceal my arrival from him for a few days.

Pap. Vous avez raison.

Y. Wild. Well, my Mentor, and how am I to manage? direct my road: where must I begin? But the debate is, I suppose, of consequence?

Pap. Vraiment.

Y. Wild. How long have you left Paris, Papillion?

Pap. Twelve, dirteen year.

Y. Wild. I can't compliment you upon your progress in English.

Pap. The accent is difficult.

Y. Wild. But here you are at home.

Pap. C'est vrai.

Y. Wild. No stranger to fashionable places.

Pap. O faite!

Y. Wild. Acquainted with the fashionable figure of both sexes.

Pap. Sans doute.

Y. Wild. Well then, upon your lecture: And, d'ye hear, Papillion, as you have the honour to be promoted from the mortifying condition of an humble valet, to the important charge of a private tutor, let us discard all distance between us: See me ready to slack my thirst at your fountain of knowledge, my Magnus Apollo.

Pap. Here then I disclose my Helicon to my poetical pupil.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Hey, Papillion!

Pap. Sir?

Y. Wild. What is this? why you speak English!

Pap. Without doubt.

Y. Wild. But like a native;

Pap. To be sure.

Y. Wild. And what am I to conclude from all this?

Pap. Logically thus, Sir: Whoever speaks pure English is an Englishman; I speak pure English; ergo, I am an Englishman. There's a categorical syllogism for you, Major, Minor, and Consequence. What do you think, Sir, that whilst you was busy at Oxford, I was idle? no, no, no.

Y. Wild. Well, Sir, but notwithstanding your pleasantry, I must have this matter explain'd.

Pap. So you shall, my good Sir; but don't be in such a hurry: You can't suppose I would give you the key, unless I meant you should open the door.

Y. Wild. Why then, prithee unlock.

Pap. Immediately. But by way of entering upon my post as preceptor, suffer me first to give you a hint: You must not expect, Sir, to find here, as at Oxford, men appearing in their real characters; every body there, Sir, knows that Dr. Muffy is a fellow of Maudlin, and Tom Trifle a student of Christchurch; but this town is one great comedy, in which not only the principles, but frequently the persons are feigned.

Y. Wild. A useful observation.

Pap. Why now, Sir, at the first coffee-house I shall enter you, you will perhaps meet a man from whose decent sable dress, placid countenance, insinuating behaviour, short sword, with the waiter's civil addition of "a dish of coffee for

THE LYAR

for Dr. Julap," you would suppose him to be a physician.

Y. Wild. Well?

Pap. Does not know diascordium from diaculum. An absolute French spy, concealed under the shelter of a huge medicinal perriwig.

Y. Wild. Indeed!

Pap. A martial figure too, it is odds but you will encounter; from whose scars, title, dress, and address, you would suppose to have had a share in every action since the peace of the Pyrenees; runner to a gaming-table, and bully to a bawdy-house. Battles to be sure he has been in—with the watch; and frequently a prisoner too—in the round-house.

Y. Wild. Amazing!

Pap. In short, Sir, you will meet with lawyers who practise smuggling, and merchants who trade upon Hounslow-heath; reverend atheists, right honourable sharpers, and Frenchmen from the county of York.

Y. Wild. In the last list, I presume, you roll.

Pap. Just my situation.

Y. Wild. And pray, Sir, what may be your motive for this whimsical transformation?

Pap. A very harmless one, I promise you; I would only avail myself at the expence of folly and prejudice.

Y. Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, Sir——But, to be better understood, I believe it will be necessary to give you a short sketch of the principal incidents of my life.

Y. Wild. Prithee do.

Pap. Why then you are to know, Sir, that my former situation has been rather above my present condition, having once sustained the dignity of sub-preceptor to one of those cheap rural academies

academies with which our county of York is so plentifully stocked.

Y. Wild. But to the point: Why this disguise? Why renounce your country?

Pap. There, Sir, you make a little mistake; it was my country that renounced me.

Y. Wild. Explain.

Pap. In an instant; upon quitting the school, and first coming to town, I got recommended to the compiler of the Monthly Review.

Y. Wild. What an author too?

Pap. Oh, a voluminous one: the whole region of the belles lettres fell under my inspection; physic, divinity, and the mathematics, my mistress managed herself. There, Sir, like another Aristarch, I dealt out fame and damnation at pleasure. In obedience to the caprice and commands of my master, I have condemn'd books I never read, and applauded the fidelity of a translation, without understanding one syllable of the original.

Y. Wild. Ah! why I thought acuteness of discernment, and depth of knowledge, were necessary to accomplish a critic.

Pap. Yes, Sir; but not a monthly one. Our method was very concise: We copy the title-page of a new book; we never go any further: If we are ordered to praise it, we have at hand about ten words, which, scatter'd through as many periods, effectually does the business; as, "laudable design, happy arrangement, spirited language, nervous sentiment, elevation of thought, conclusive argument;" if we are to decry, then we have, "unconnected, flat, false, illiberal stricture, reprehensible, unnatural:" And thus, Sir, we pepper the author, and soon rid our hands of his work.

B

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. A short recipe.

Pap. And yet, Sir, you have all the materials that are necessary: These are the arms with which we engage authors of every kind. To us all subjects are equal; plays or sermons, poetry or politics, music or midwifry, it is the same thing.

Y. Wild. How came you to resign this easy employment?

Pap. It would not answer. Notwithstanding what we say, people will judge for themselves; our work hung upon hand, and all I could get from the publisher was four shillings a-week, and my small beer. Poor pittance!

Y. Wild. Poor indeed.

Pap. Oh, half starv'd me!

Y. Wild. What was your next change?

Pap. I was mightily puzzled to choose. Some would have had me turn player, and others methodist preacher; but as I had no money to build me a tabernacle, I did not think it could answer; and as to player—whatever might happen to me, I was determined not to bring a disgrace upon my family, and so I resolved to turn footman.

Y. Wild. Wisely resolv'd.

Pap. Yes, Sir, but not so easily executed.

Y. Wild. No!

Pap. Oh no, Sir. Many a weary step have I taken after a place: Here I was too old, there I was too young; here the last livery was too big, there it was too little; here I was awkward, there I was knowing; madam dislik'd me at this house, her ladyship's woman at the next; so that I was as much puzzled to find out a place, as the great Cynic philosopher to discover a man. In short, I was quite in a state of despair, when chance threw an old friend in my way that quite retrieved my affairs.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Pray who might he be?

Pap. A little bit of a Swiss genius, who had been French usher with me at the same school in the country. I opened my melancholy story to him over three-pennyworth of beef-a-la-mode, in a cellar in St. Ann's. My little foreign friend purs'd up his lanthorn jaws, and with a shrug of contempt, "Ah, maitre Jean, vous n'avez pas la politique; you have no finesse: To trive here you must study the folly of your own country." "How, Monsieur!" "Taisez vous. Keep a your tongue! autre foy! I teach you speak French, now I teach a you to forget English. Go vid me to my lodgement, I vil give you proper dress, den go present yourself to de same hotels, de very same house; you will find all de doors dat was shut in your face as footman Anglois, will fly open demselves to a French valet de chambre."

Y. Wild. Well, Papillion?

Pap. Gad, Sir, I thought it was but an honest artifice, so I determin'd to follow my friend's advice.

Y. Wild. Did it succeed?

Pap. Better than expectation: My tawny face, long queue, and broken English, was a pas par tout. Besides, when I am out of place, this disguise procures me many resources.

Y. Wild. As how?

P. Why, at a pinch, Sir, I am either a teacher of tongues, a friseur, a dentist, or a dancing-master; these, Sir, are hereditary professions to Frenchmen. But now, Sir, to the point: As you were pleased to be so candid with me, I was determin'd to have no reserve with you. You have studied books, I have studied men; you want advice, and I have some at your service.

Y. Wild. Well, I'll be your customer.

Pap. But guard my secret : if I should be so unfortunate to lose your place, don't shut me out from every other.

Y. Wild. You may rely upon me.

Pap. In a few years I shall be in a condition to retire from business ; but whether I shall settle at my family-seat, or pass over the continent, is as yet undetermined. Perhaps, in gratitude to the country, I may purchase a marquissate near Paris, and spend the money I have got by their means, generously amongst them.

Y. Wild. A grateful intention. But let us sally. Where do we open ?

Pap. Let us see—one o'clock—it is a fine day : the Mall will be crowded.

Y. Wild. Alons.

Pap. But don't stare, Sir : survey every thing with an air of habit and indifference.

Y. Wild. Never fear.

Pap. But I would, Sir, crave a moment's audience, upon a subject that may prove very material to you.

Y. Wild. proceed.

Pap. You will pardon my presumption ; but you have, my good master, one little foible that I could wish you to correct.

Y. Wild. What is it ?

Pap. And yet it is a pity too, you do it so very well.

Y. Wild. Prithee be plain.

Pap. You have, Sir, a lively imagination, with a most happy turn for invention.

Y. Wild. Well.

Pap. But now and then in your narratives you are hurry'd, by a flow of spirits, to border upon the improbable, a little given to the marvellous.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. I understand you : what, I am somewhat subject to lying.

Pap. Oh, pardon me, Sir ; I don't say that ; no, no, only a little apt to embellish, that's all. To be sure it is a fine gift ; that there is no disputing : but men in general are so stupid, so rigorously attach'd to matter of fact——And yet this talent of yours is the very soul and spirit of poetry ; and why it should not be the same in prose, I can't for my life determine.

Y. Wild. You would advise me, then, not to be quite so poetical in prose ?

Pap. Why, Sir, if you would descend a little to the grovelling comprehension of the million, I think it would be as well.

Y. Wild. I'll think of it.

Pap. Besides, Sir, people in this town are more smoaky and suspicious. Oxford, you know, is the seat of the muses, and a man is naturally permitted more ornament and garniture to his conversation than they will allow in this latitude.

Y. Wild. I believe you are right. But we shall be late. D'ye hear me, Papillion : if at any time you find me growing too poetical give me a hint ; your advice shan't be thrown away.

[*Exit.*

Pap. I wish it mayn't ; but the disease is too rooted to be quickly removed. Lord, how I have sweat for him ! yet he is as unembarrassed, easy, and fluent, all the time as if he really believed what he said. Well, to be sure he is a great master ; it is a thousand pities his genius could not be converted to some public service : I think the government should employ him to answer the Brussels Gazette. I'll be hanged if he is not too many for Monsieur Maubert, at his own weapons.

[*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE the Park.

*Enter Miss GRANTAM and Miss GODFREY,
and Servant.*

Miss Grantam. John, let the chariot go round to Spring-Gardens, for your mistress and I shall call at Lady Bab's, Miss Arabella Allnight's, the Countess of Crumple's, and the tall man's, this morning. My dear Miss Godfrey, what trouble I have had to get you out! why, child, you are as tedious as a long morning. Do you know now, that of all places of public rendezvous I honour the Park? forty thousand million of times preferable to the play-house! Don't you think so my dear?

Miss Godfrey. They are both well in their way.

M. Gr. Way! why the purpose of both is the same; to meet company, isn't it? what, d'ye think I go there for the plays, or come here for the trees? ha! ha! well that is well enough. But, O Gemini! I beg a million of pardons: You are a prude, and have no relish for the little innocent liberties with which a fine woman may indulge herself in public.

M. God. Liberties in public!

M. Gr. Yes, child, such as anchoring a song at an opera, interrupting a play in a critical scene of distress, hallooing to a pretty fellow cross the Mall, as loud as if you were calling a coach. Why, do you know now, my dear that by a lucky stroke in dress, and a few high airs of my own making, I have had the good fortune to be gazed at and followed by as great a croud, on a Sunday, as if I was the Tripoly ambassador?

M. God.

M. God. The good fortune Ma'am! Surely, the wish of every decent women is to be unnoticed in public.

M. Gr. Decent! oh, my dear queer creature, what a phrase have you found out for a woman of fashion! Decency is, child, a mere bourgeois, plebeian quality, and fit only for those who pay court to the world, and not to us to whom the world pays court. Upon my word, you must enlarge your ideas: you are a fine girl and we must not have you lost; I'll undertake you myself. But, as I was saying—Pray, my dear, what was I saying?

M. God. I profess I don't recollect.

M. Gr. Hey!—Oh, ah, the Park. One great reason for my loving the Park is, that one has so many opportunities of creating connections.

M. God. Ma'am

M. Gr. Nay, don't look grave. Why, do you know that all my male friendships are form'd in this place?

M. God. It is an odd spot: But you must pardon me if I doubt the possibility.

M. Gr. Oh, I will convince you in a moment; for here seems to be coming a good smart figure that I do'nt recollect. I will throw out a lure.

M. God. Nay, for Heaven's sake!

M. Gr. I am detirmin'd, child: that is——

M. God. You will excuse my withdrawing.

M. Gr. Oh, please yourself, my dear.

[Exit Miss Godfrey.]

Enter YOUNG WILDING with PAPILLION.

Y. Wild. Your ladyship's handkerchief, Ma'am.

M. Gr. I am, Sir, concern'd at the trouble—

Y. Wild. A most happy incident for me, Madam; as chance has given me an honour in one lucky

lucky minute, that the most diligent attention has not been able to procure for me in the whole tedious round of a revolving year.

M. Gr. Is this meant to me, Sir?

Y. Wild. To whom else, Madam? Surely you must have mark'd my respectful assiduity, my uninterrupted attendance; to plays, operas, balls, routs, and ridottas, I have pursued you like your shadow; I have besieged your door for a glimpse of your exit and entrance, like a distressed creditor, who has no arms against privilege but perseverance.

Pap. So, now he is in for it; stop him who can.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, ever since I quitted America, which I take now to be about a year, I have as faithfully guarded the live-long night, your ladyship's portal, as a centinal the powder magazine in a fortified city.

Pap. Quitted America! well pull'd.

M. Gr. You have serv'd in America then?

Y. Wild. Full four years Ma'am: and during that whole time, not a single action of consequence, but I had an opportunity to signalize myself; and I think I may, without vanity, affirm, I did not miss the occasion. You have heard of Quebec, I presume?

Pap. What the deuce is he driving at now?

Y. Wild. The project to surprize that place was thought a happy expedient, and the first mounting the breach a gallant exploit. There, indeed, the whole army did me justice.

M. Gr. I have heard the honour of that conquest attributed to another name.

Y. Wild. The mere taking the town, Ma'am. But that's a trifle: sieges now a-days are reduc'd to certainties; it is amazing how minutely

mutely exact we, who knew the business are at calculation: for instance now, we will suppose the commander in chief, addressing himself to me, was to say, "Colonel, I want to reduce that fortress; what will be the expence?" "Why, please your highness, the reduction of that fortress will cost you one thousand and two lives, sixty-nine legs, ditto arms, fourscore fractures, with about twenty dozen of flesh wounds."

M. Gr. And you shall be near the mark?

Y. Wild. To an odd joint, Ma'am. But, Madam, it is not to the French alone that my feats are confin'd: Cherokees, Catabaws, with all the Aws and Ees of the continent, have felt the force of my arms.

Pap. This is too much, Sir.

Y. Wild. Hands off! Nor am I less adroit at a treaty, Madam, than terrible in battle. To me we owe the friendship of the Five Nations, and I had the first honour of smoaking the pipe of peace with the little Carpenter.

M. Gr. And so young!

Y. Wild. This gentleman, though a Frenchman and an enemy, I had the fortune to deliver from the Mohawks, whose prisoner he had been for nine years. He gives a most entertaining account of their laws and customs: he shall present you with the wampum belt, and a scalping-knife. Will you permit him, Madam, just to give you a taste of the military dance, with a short specimen of their warhoop.

Pap. For Heaven's sake!

M. Gr. The place is too public.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, after having gathered as many laurels abroad as would garnish a Gothic cathedral at Christmas, I returned to reap the harvest of the well-fought field. Here it was

C

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my good fortune to encounter you : then was the victor vanquished ; what the enemy could never accomplish, your eyes in an instant atchiev'd ; prouder to serve here than command in chief elsewhere ; and more glorious in wearing your chains, than in triumphing over the vanquish'd world.

M. Gr. I have got here a most heroical lover : But I see Sir James Elliot coming, and must dismiss him [*Aside*] Well, Sir, I accept the tender of your passion, and may find a time to renew our acquaintance ; at present it is necessary we should separate.

Y. Wild. " Slave to your will, I live but to obey you." But may I be indulged with the knowledge of your residence.

M. Gr. Sir ?

Y. Wild. Your place of above.

M. Gr. Oh, Sir, you can't want to be acquainted with that ; you have a whole year stood centinel at my ladyship's portal.

Y. Wild. Madam, I—I—I—

M. Gr. Oh, Sir, your servant. Ha, ha, ha ! What, you are caught ! Ha, ha, ha ! Well, he has a more intrepid assurance. Adieu, my Mars. Ha, ha, ha ! [*Exit.*

Pap. That last was an unlucky question, Sir.

Y. Wild. A little mal-a-propos I must confess.

Pap. A man should have a good memory who deals much in this poetical prose.

Y. Wild. Poh ! I'll soon re-establish my credit. But I must know who this girl is : Hark ye, Papillion, could not you contrive to pump out of her footman—I see there he stands—the name of his mistress ?

Pap. I will try.

[*Exit.*

[*Wilding retires to the back of the stage.*
Enter

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT, and Servant.

Sir James. Music and an entertainment ?

Servant. Yes, Sir.

Sir Ja. Last night, upon the water ?

Serv. Upon the water, last night.

Sir Ja. Who gave it ?

Serv. That, Sir, I can't say.

To them WILDING.

Y. Wild. Sir James Elliot your most devoted

Sir Ja. Ah, my dear Wilding ! you are welcome to town.

Y. Wilding. You will pardon my impatience ; I interrupted you ; you seem'd upon an interesting subject.

Sir Ja. Oh, an affair of gallantry.

Y. Wild. Of what kind ?

Sir. Ja. A young lady regal'd last night by her lover, on the Thames.

Y. Wild. As how ?

Sir Ja. A band of music in boats.

Y. Wild. Were they good performers ?

Sir Ja. The best. Then conducted to Marble-hall, where she found a magnificent collation.

Y. Wild. Well order'd ?

Sir Ja. With elegance. After supper a ball ; and to conclude the night, a firework.

Y. Wild. Was the last well design'd ?

Sir Ja. Superb.

Y. Wild. And happily executed ?

Sir Ja. Not a single faux pas.

Y. Wild. And you don't know who gave it ?

Sir Ja. I can't even guess.

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha !

Sir. Ja. Why do you laugh ?

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha ! It was me.

Sir Ja. You!

Pap. You, Sir!

Y. Wild. Moi—me.

Pap. So, so, so; he is enter'd again.

Sir Ja. Why, you are fortunate, to find a mistress in so short a space of time.

Y. Wild. Short! why, man, I have been in London these six weeks.

Pap. O Lord, O Lord!

Y. Wild. It is true, not caring to encounter my father, I have rarely ventur'd out but at nights.

Pap. I can hold no longer. Dear Sir.

Y. Wild. Peace, puppy!

Pap. A curb to your poetical vein.

Y. Wild. I shall curb your impertinence.—But since the story is got abroad I will, my dear friend, treat you with all the particulars.

Sir Ja. I shall hear it with pleasure.—This is a lucky adventure: But he must not know he is my rival. [*Aside*]

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, between six and seven my goddess embark'd at Somerset-stairs, in one of the companies barges, gilt and hung with damask, expressly for the occasion.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. At the cabin-door she was accosted by a beautiful boy, who, in the garb of a Cupid, paid her some compliments in verse of my own composing: the conceits were pretty; allusions to Venus and the sea—the lady and the Thames—no great matter; but, however, well-tim'd, and what was better, well taken.

Sir. Ja. Doubtless.

Pap. At what a rate he runs!

Y. Wild. As soon as we had gained the center of the river. two boats full of trumpets, French horns,

horns, and other martial music, struck up their sprightly strains from the Surry-side, which were echo'd by a suitable number of lutes, flutes, and hautboys from the opposite shore. In this state, the oars keeping time, we majestically sail'd along, till the arches of the New Bridge gave a pause, and an opportunity for an elegant desert in Dresden china, by Robinson. Here the repast clos'd, with a few favourite airs from Eliza, Tenducci, and the Mattei.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. Opposite Lambeth I had prepared a naval engagement, in which Boscawen's victory over the French was repeated: the action was conducted by one of the commanders on that expedition, and not a single incident omitted.

Sir Ja. Surely you exaggerate a little.

Pap. Yes, yes, this battle will sink him.

Y. Wild. True to the letter, upon my honour, I sha'n't trouble you with a repetition of our collation, ball, feu d'artifice, with the thousand little incidental amusements that chance or design produc'd; it is a enough to know, that all that could flatter the senses, fire the imagination, or gratify the expectation, was there produc'd in a lavish abundance.

Sir Ja. The sacrifice was, I presume, grateful to your deity.

Y. Wild. Upon that subject you must pardon my silence.

Pap. Modest creature!

Sir Ja. I wish you joy of your success.---For the present you will excuse me.

Y. Wild. Nay, but stay and hear the conclusion.

Sir Ja. For that I shall seize another occasion. [Exit.

Pap. Nobly perform'd, Sir.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Yes, I think happily hit off.

Pap. May I take the liberty to offer one question?

Y. Wild. Freely.

Pap. Pray, Sir, are you often visited with these waking dreams?

Y. Wild. Dreams! what dost mean by dreams?

Pap. These ornamental reveries, these frolics of fancy, which, in the judgment of the vulgar, would be deem'd absolute flames.

Y. Wild. Why, Papillion, you have but a poor, narrow, circumscribed genius.

Pap. I must own, Sir, I have no sublimity sufficient to relish the full fire of your Pindaric muse.

Y. Wild. No; a plebeian soul! But I will animate thy clay: mark my example, follow my steps, and in time thou may'st rival thy master.

Pap. Never, never, Sir, I have no talents to fight battles without blows, and give feasts that don't cost me a farthing. Besides, Sir, to what purpose are all these embellishments? Why tell the lady you have been in London a year?

Y. Wild. The better to plead the length, and consequently the strength of my passion.

Pap. But why, Sir, a soldier.

Y. Wild. How little thou know'st of the sex! What, I suppose thou would'st have me attack them in mood and figure, by a pedantic, classical quotation, or a pompous parade of jargon from the schools. What, dost think that women are to be got like degrees?

Pap. Nay, Sir——

Y. Wild. No, no; the *savoir vivre* is the science for them; the man of war is their man: they must be taken like towns, by lines of approach, counterescarps, angles, trenches, cohornes, and

and covert-ways ; then enter sword in hand, pell-mell ! oh, how they melt at the Gothic names of General Swappinback, Count Roufoumoufky, Prince Montecuculi, and Marshal Fustinburgh ! Men may say what they will of their Ovid, their Petrarch, and their Waller, but I'll undertake to do more business by the single aid of **the** London Gazette, than by all the sighing, **dying**, crying crochets, that the whole race of rhymers have ever produced.

Pap. Very well, Sir ; this is all very lively ; but remember the travelling pitcher : if you don't one time or other, under favour, lye yourself into some confounded scrape, I will content to be hanged.

Y. Wild. Do you think so, Papillion ?— And whenever that happens, if I don't lye myself out of it again, why then I will be content to be crucify'd. And so, along after the lady. [*Stops short, going out.*] Zounds, here comes my father ! I must fly. Watch him, Papillion, and bring me word to the Cardigan.

[*Exeunt separately.*]

E N D of the F I R S T A C T.

A C T



A C T II.

CENE. A TAVERN.

YOUNG WILDING *and* PAPILLION *rising from Table.*

Young Wilding.

GAD, I had like to have run into the old gentleman's mouth.

Pap. It is pretty near the same thing; for I saw him join Sir James Elliot: so your arrival is no longer a secret.

Y. Wild. Why then I must lose my pleasure, and you your preferment: I must submit to the dull decency of a sober family, and you to the customary duties of brushing and powdering. But I was so flutter'd at meeting my father, that I forgot the fair; pr'ythee who is she?

Pap. There were two.

Y. Wild. That I saw?

Pap. From her footman I learnt her name was Godfrey.

Y. Wild. And her fortune!

Pap. Immense.

Y. Wild. Single, I hope?

Pap. Certainly

wild Pap. Then will I have her.

Pap. What, whether she will or no?

Y. Wild. Yes.

Pap. How will you manage that?

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. By making it impossible for her to marry any one else.

Pap. I don't understand you, Sir.

Y. Wild. Oh, I shall only have recourse to that talent you so mightily admire. You will see, by the circulation of a few anecdotes, how soon I will get rid of my rivals.

Pap. At the expence of the lady's reputation, perhaps.

Y. Wild. That will be as it happens.

Pap. And have you no qualms, Sir?

Y. Wild. Why, where's the injury?

Pap. No injury to ruin her fame!

Y. Wild. I will restore it to her again.

Pap. How?

Y. Wild. Turn tinker and mend it myself.

Pap. Which way?

Y. Wild. The old way; solder it by marriage: that, you know, is the modern salve for every fore,

Enter WAITER.

Wait. An elderly gentleman to enquire for Mr Wilding.

Y. Wild. For me! what sort of a being is it?

Wait. Being, Sir!

Y. Wild. Ay; how is he drest?

Wait. In a tye-wig and snuff-colour'd coat.

Pap. Zooks, Sir, it is your father.

Y. Wild. Shew him up. *[Exit Waiter.]*

Pap. And what must I do?

Y. Wild. Recover your broken English, but preserve your rank: I have a reason for it.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Your servant, Sir: your are welcome to town.

D

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. You have just prevented me, Sir: I was preparing to pay my duty to you.

O. Wild. If you thought it a duty, you should, I think, have sooner discharg'd it.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Was it quite so decent, Jack, to be six weeks in town, and conceal yourself only from me?

Y. Wild. Six weeks! I have scarce been six hours.

O. Wild. Come, come, I am better inform'd.

Y. Wild. Indeed, Sir, you are impos'd upon. This gentleman (who first give me leave to have the honour of introducing to you), this, Sir, is the marquis de Chatteau Briant, of an ancient house in Brittany; who, travelling through England, chose to make Oxford for some time the place of his residence, where I had the happiness of his acquaintance.

O. Wild. Does he speak English.

Y. Wild. Not fluently, but understands it perfectly.

Pap. Pray, Sir,—

O. Wild. Any services, Sir, that I can render you here you may readily command.

Pap. Beacoup d'honneur.

Y. Wild. This gentleman, I say, Sir, whose quality and country are sufficient securities for his veracity, will assure you that yesterday we left Oxford together.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Pap. C'est vrai.

O. Wild. This is amazing, I was, at the same time, inform'd of another circumstance too, that, I confess, made me a little uneasy, as it interfer'd with a favourite scheme of my own.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. What could that be, pray, Sir?

O. Wild. That you had conceiv'd a violent affection for a fair lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And had given her very gallant and very expensive proofs of your passion.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir!

O. Wild. Particularly last night; music, collations, balls, and fireworks.

Y. Wild. Monsieur le marquis!—And pray, Sir, who could tell you all this?

O. Wild. An old friend of yours.

Y. Wild. His name, if you please.

O. Wild. Sir James Elliot.

Y. Wild. Yes: I thought he was the man.

O. Wild. Your reason.

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, though Sir James Elliot has a great many good qualities, and is, upon the whole, a valuable man, yet he has one fault which has long determined me to drop his acquaintance.

O. Wild. What may that be?

Y. Wild. Why you can't, Sir, be a stranger to his prodigious skill in the traveller's talent.

O. Wild. How!

Y. Wild. Oh, notorious to a proverb.—His friends, who are tender of his fame, gloss over his foible, by calling him an agreeable novelist: and so he is, with a vengeance. Why, he will tell you more lyes in an hour, than all the circulating libraries, put together, will publish in a year.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Oh, he is the modern Mandeville at Oxford; he was always distinguish'd by the facetious appellation of the Bouncer.

O. Wild. Amazing!

Y. Wild. Lord, Sir, he is so well understood in his own country, that at the last Hereford assize a cause, as clear as the sun, was absolutely thrown away by his being merely mentioned as a witness.

O. Wild. A strange turn.

Y. Wild. Unaccountable. But there I think they went a little too far; for if it had come to an oath, I don't think he would have bounc'd neither; but in common occurrences there is no repeating after him. Indeed, my great reason for dropping him was, that my credit began to be a little suspected too.

Pap. Poor gentleman!

O. Wild. Why, I never heard this of him.

Y. Wild. That may be: but can there be a stronger proof of his practice than the flam he has been telling you, of fireworks, and the Lord knows what. And I dare swear, Sir, he was very fluent and florid in his description.

O. Wild. Extremely.

Y. Wild. Yes, that is just his way; and not a syllable of truth from the beginning to the ending, marquis?

Pap. Oh, dat is all a fiction upon mine honour.

Y. Wild. You see, Sir.

O. Wild. Clearly. I really can't help pitying the poor man. I have heard of people, who, by long habit, become a kind of constitutional lyars.

Y. Wild. Your observation is just; that is exactly his case.

Pap. I'm sure it is your's.

O. Wild. Well; Sir, I suppose we shall see you this evening.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. The marquis has an appointment with some of his countrymen, which I have promis'd to attend; besides, Sir, as he is an entire stranger in town, he may want my little services.

O. Wild. Where can I see you in about an hour? I have a short visit to make, in which you are deeply concern'd.

Y. Wild. I shall attend your commands; but where?

O. Wild. Why here. Marquis, I am your obedient servant.

Pap. Votre serviteur tres humble.

[*Exit Old Wilding.*]

Y. Wild. So, Papillion; that difficulty is dispatch'd. I think I am even with Sir James for his rattling.

Pap. Most ingeniously manag'd: But are not you afraid of the consequence?

Y. Wild. I do not comprehend you.

Pap. A future explanation between the parties.

Y. Wild. That may embarrass: but the day is distant. I warrant I will bring myself off.

Pap. It is in vain for me to advise.

Y. Wild. Why, to say truth, I do begin to find my system attended with danger: Give me your hand, Papillion—I will reform.

Pap. Ah, Sir!

Y. Wild. I positively will: Why this practice may in time destroy my credit.

Pap. That is pretty well done already. [*Aside.*] Ay, think of that, Sir.

Y. Wild. Well, if I don't turn out the meereft dull matter of fact fellow——But, Papillion, I must scribble a billet to my new flame. I think her name is——

Pap.

Pap. Godfrey; her father, an Indian governor, shut up in the strong room at Calcutta, left her all his wealth: she lives near miss Grantam, by Grosvenor-square.

Y. Wild. A governor!—oh ho!—Bushels of rupees, and pecks of pagodas, I reckon.—Well, I long to be rumaging.—But the old gentleman will soon return: I will hasten to finish my letter.—But, Papillion, what could my father mean by a visit in which I am deeply concern'd?

Pap. I can't guess.

Y. Wild. I shall know presently.—To Miss Godfrey, formerly of Calcutta, now residing in Grosvenor-square.—Papillion, I won't tell her a word of a lye.

Pap. You won't, Sir?

Y. Wild. No; it would be ungenerous to deceive a lady. No; I will be open, candid and sincere.

Pap. And if you are, it will be the first time.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Miss GRANTAM and Miss GODFREY.

M. God. And you really like this gallant spark?

M. Gr. Prodigiously. Oh, I'm quite in love with his assurance! I wonder who he is: he can't have been long in town: a young fellow of his easy impudence must have soon made his way to the best of company.

M. God. By way of amusement he may prove no disagreeable acquaintance; but you can't, surely, have any serious designs upon him.

M. Gr. Indeed but I have.

M. God.

M. God. And poor Sir James Elliot is to be discarded at once?

M. Gr. Oh, no.

M. God. What is your intention in regard to him?

M. Gr. Hey?—I can't tell you. Perhaps, if I don't like this new man better, I may marry him.

M. God. Thou art a strange giddy girl.

M. Gr. Quite the reverse; a perfect pattern of prudence: why, would you have me less careful of my person than my purse?

M. God. My dear!

M. Gr. Why I say, child, my fortune being in money, I have some in India-bonds, some in the Bank, some on this loan, some on the other; so that if one fun fails, I have a sure resource in the rest.

M. God. Very true.

M. Gr. Well, my dear, just so I manage my love-affairs: if I should not like this man—if he should not like me—if we should quarrel—if, if—or in short, if any of the ifs should happen, which you know break engagements every day, why by this means I shall never be at a loss,

M. God. Quite provident. Well, and pray on how many different securities have you at present plac'd out your love?

M. Gr. Three: the sober Sir James Elliot, the new America-man, and this morning I expected a formal propofal from an old friend of my father.

M. God. Mr. Wilding.

M. Gr. Yes; but I don't reckon much upon him: for you know, my dear, what can I do with an awkward, raw, college cub? Though,
upon

upon second thoughts, that may'at be too bad neither ; for as I must have the fashioning of him, he may be easily moulded to one's mind.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Wilding, Madam.

M. Gr. Shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*] You need not go, my dear ; we have no particular business.

M. God. I wonder now what she calls particular business.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Ladies your servant. I wait upon you, Madam, with a request from my son, that he may be permitted the honour of kissing your hand.

M. Gr. Your son is in town then ?

O. Wild. He came last night, Ma'am ; and though but just from the university I think I may venture to affirm, with as little the air of a pedant as——

M. Gr. I don't, Mr. Wilding, question the accomplishments of your son ; and shall own too, that his being descended from the old friend of my father, is to me the strongest recommendation.

O. Wild. You honour me, Madam.

M. Gr. But, Sir, I have something to say—

O. Wild. Pray, Madam, speak out ; it is impossible to be too explicit on these important occasions.

M. Gr. Why then, Sir, to a man of your wisdom and experience I need not observe, that the loss of a parent to counsel and direct at this solemn

lemn crisis, has made a greater degree of personal prudence necessary in me.

O. Wild. Perfectly right, Ma'am.

M. Gr. We live, Sir, in a very censorious world ; a young woman can't be too much upon her guard ; nor should I chuse to admit any man in the quality of a lover, if there was not at least a strong probability——

O. Wild. Of a more intimate connection. I hope, Madam, you have heard nothing to the disadvantage of my son.

M. Gr. Not a syllable : but you know, Sir, there are such things in nature as unaccountable antipathies, aversions, that we take at first sight : I should be glad there could be no danger of that.

O. Wild. I understand you, Madam ; you shall have all the satisfaction imaginable : Jack is to meet me immediately : I will conduct him under your window ; and if his figure has the misfortune to displease, I will take care his addresses shall never offend you. Your most obedient servant. *Exit.]*

M. Gr. Now there is a polite, sensible, old father for you.

M. God. Yes ; and a very discreet, prudent daughter he is likely to have. Oh, you are a great hypocrite, Kitty.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A letter to you, Madam. [*To Miss Godfrey.*] Sir James Elliot to wait on your ladyship. [*To Miss Grantam.*] *Exit.*

M. Gr. Lord, I hope he won't stay long here. He comes and seems intirely wrapt up in the distempers : what can be the matter now ?

E

Enter

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir Ja. In passing by your door, I took the liberty, Ma'am, of enquiring after your health.

M. Gr. Very obliging. I hope, Sir, you receiv'd a favourable account.

Sir Ja. I did not know but you might have caught cold last night.

M. Gr. Cold ! why Sir, I hope I did not sleep with my bed-chamber window open.

Sir Ja. Ma'am !

M. Gr. Sir !

Sir Ja. No, Ma'am ; but it was rather hazardous to stay so late upon the water.

M. Gr. Upon the water !

Sir Ja. Not but the variety of amusements, it must be own'd, were a sufficient temptation.

M. Gr. What can he be driving at now !

Sir Ja. And pray, Madam, what think you of Young Wilding ? is not he a gay, agreeable, sprightly——

M. Gr. I never give my opinion of people I don't know.

Sir Ja. You don't know him !

M. Gr. No.

Sir Ja. And his father I did not meet at your door !

M. Gr. Most likely you did.

Sir Ja. I am glad you own that, however : But, for the son, you never——

M. Gr. Set eyes upon him.

Sir Ja. Really ?

M. Gr. Really.

Sir Ja. Finely supported. Now, Madam, do you know that one of us is just going to make a very ridiculous figure ?

M. Gr.

M. Gr. Sir, I never had the least doubt of your talents for excelling in that way.

Sir Ja. Ma'am, you do me honour : but it does not happen to fall to my lot upon this occasion, however.

M. Gr. And that is a wonder !—What, then I am to be the fool of the comedy, I suppose.

Sir Ja. Admirably rally'd ! But I shall dash the spirit of that triumphant laugh.

M. Gr. I dare the attack. Come on, Sir.

Sir Ja. Known then, and blush, if you are not as lost to shame as dead to decency, that I am no stranger to all last night's transactions.

M. Gr. Indeed !

Sir Ja. From your first entering the barge at Somerset-house, to your last landing at Whitehall.

M. Gr. Surprizing !

Sir Ja. Cupids, collations, feasts, fireworks, all have reach'd me.

M. Gr. Why you deal in magic.

Sir Ja. My intelligence is as natural as it is infallible.

M. Gr. May I be indulg'd with the name of your informer.

Sir Ja. Freely, Madam. Only the very individual spark to whose folly you were indebted for this gallant profusion.

M. Gr. But his name ?

Sir Ja. Young Wilding.

M. Gr. You had this story from him ?

Sir Ja. I had.

M. Gr. From Wilding !—That is amazing.

Sir Ja. Oh ho ! what you are confounded at last ; and no evasion to subterfuge, no——

M. Gr. Lookye, Sir James ; what you can mean by this strange story, and very extraordi-

nary behaviour, it is impossible for me to conceive; but if it is meant as an artifice to palliate your infidelity to me, less pains would have answer'd your purpose.

Sir Ja. Oh, Madam, I know you are provided.

M. Gr. Matchless insolence! as you can't expect that I should be prodigiously pleas'd with the subject of this visit, you won't be surprized at my wishing it as short as possible.

Sir Ja. I don't wonder you feel pain at my presence: but you may rest secure you will have no interruption for me; and I really think it would be pity to part two people so exactly formed for each other. Your ladyship's servant. [*Going.*] But, Madam, though your sex secures you from any farther resentment, yet the present object of your favour may have something to fear.

[*Exit.*]

M. Gr. Very well. Now my dear I hope you will acknowledge the prudence of my plan. To what a pretty condition I must have been reduc'd if my hopes had rested upon one lover alone.

M. God. But are you sure that your method to multiply, may not be the means to reduce the number of your slaves?

M. Gr. Impossible!—Why can't you discern that this sham of Sir James Elliot's is a mere fetch to favour his retreat.

M. God. And you never saw Wilding?

M. Gr. Never.

M. God. There is some mystery in this. I have too here in my hand another mortification that you must endure.

M. Gr. Of what kind?

M. God.

M. God. A little ally'd to the last : it is from the military spark you met this morning.

M. Gr. What are the contents ?

M. God. Only a formal declaration of love.

M. Gr. Why, you did not see him.

M. God. But it seems he did me.

M. Gr. Might I peruse it ?—" Battles—no wounds so fatal—cannon-balls—Cupid—spring a mine—cruelty—die on a counterscrap—eyes—artillery—death the stranger." It is address'd to you.

M. God. I told you so.

M. Gr. You will pardon me, my dear ; but I really can't compliment you upon the supposition of a conquest at my expence.

M. God. That would be enough to make me vain : But why do you think it was so impossible ?

M. Gr. And do you positively want a reason ?

M. God. Positively.

M. Gr. Why, then I shall refer you for an answer to a faithful counsellor and most accomplish'd critic.

M. God. Who may that be ?

M. Gr. The mirror upon your toilette.

M. God. Perhaps you may differ in judgment.

M. Gr. Why, can glasses flatter ?

M. God. I can't say I think that necessary.

M. Gr. Saucy enough !—But come, child, don't let us quarrel upon so whimsical an occasion ; time will explain the whole. You will favour me with your opinion of Young Wilding, at my window.

M. God. I attend you.

M. Gr. You will forgive me, my dear, the little hint I dropt ; it was meant merely to serve you : for indeed, child, there is no quality so insufferable

sufferable in a young woman as self-conceit and vanity.

M. God. You are most prodigiously obliging.

M. Gr. I'll follow you, Miss. [*Exit Miss Godfrey.*] Pert thing!—She grows immoderately ugly. I always thought her aukward, but she is now an absolute fright.

M. God. [*within.*] Miss, Miss Grantam, your hero's at hand.

M. Gr. I come.

M. God. As I live, the very individual stranger.

M. Gr. No, sure!—Oh Lord, let me have a peep.

M. God. It is he, it is he, it is he.

Enter OLD WILDING, YOUNG WILDING, and PAPILLION.

O. Wild. There, Marquis, you must pardon me; for though Paris be more compact, yet surely London covers a much greater quantity,—Oh, Jack, look at that corner house: how d'ye like it?

Y. Wild. Very well: but I don't see any thing extraordinary.

O. Wild. I wish though you were the master of what it contains.

Y. Wild. What may that be, Sir?

O. Wild. The mistress, you rogue, you: a fine girl, and an immense fortune; aye, and a prudent sensible wench into the bargain.

Y. Wild. Time enough yet, Sir.

O. Wild. I don't see that: You are, lad, the last of our race, and I should be glad to see some probability of its continuance.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Suppose, Sir, you were to repeat your endeavours, you have cordially my consent.

O. Wild. No; rather too late in life for that experiment.

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, would you recommend a condition to me, that you disapprove of yourself.

O. Wild. Why, Sirrah, I have done my duty to the public and my family, by producing you: now, Sir, it is incumbent on you to discharge your debt.

Y. Wild. In the college cant, I shall beg leave to tick a little longer.

O. Wild. Why then, to be serious son, this is the very business I wanted to talk with you about. In a word, I wish you married; and by providing the lady of that mansion for the purpose, I have proved myself both a father and a friend.

Y. Wild. Far be it from me to question your care; yet some preparation for so important a change——

O. Wild. Oh, I will allow you a week.

Y. Wild. A little more knowledge of the world.

O. Wild. That you may study at leisure.

Y. Wild. Now all Europe is in arms, my design was to serve my country abroad.

O. Wild. You will be full as useful to it by recruiting her subjects at home.

Y. Wild. You are then resolv'd.

O. Wild. Fix'd.

Y. Wild. Positively?

O. Wild. Peremptorily.

Y. Wild. No prayers——

O. Wild. Can move me.

Y. Wild. How the deuce shall I get out of this toil. [*Aside*] But suppose, Sir, there should be an unfurmountable objection?

O. Wild.

O. Wild. Oh, leave the reconciling that to me; I am an excellent casuist.

Y. Wild. But, I say, Sir, if it should be impossible to obey your commands?

O. Wild. Impossible!—I don't understand you.

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir!—But, on my knees, first let me crave your pardon.

O. Wild. Pardon! for what?

Y. Wild. I fear I have lost all title to your future favour.

O. Wild. Which way?

Y. Wild. I have done a deed——

O. Wild. Let us hear it.

Y. Wild. At Abington, in the county of Berks.

O. Wild. Well?

Y. Wild. I am——

O. Wild. What?

Y. Wild. Already married.

O. Wild. Married!

Pap. Married!

Y. Wild. Married.

O. Wild. And without my consent?

Y. Wild. Compell'd; fatally forc'd. Oh, Sir, did you but know all the circumstances of my sad, sad story, your rage would soon convert itself to pity.

O. Wild. What an unlucky event!—But rise, and let me hear it all.

Y. Wild. The shame and confusion I now feel renders that task at present impossible: I therefore rely for the relation on the good offices of this faithful friend.

Pap. Me, Sir, I never heard one word of the matter.

O. Wild. Come, Marquis, favour me with the particulars.

Pap.

Pap. Upon my vard, Sire, dis affair has so thock me, that I am almost as incapable to tell de tale as your son.—[*To Young Wilding.*] Dry a your tears. What can I say, Sir?

Y. Wild. Any thing.—Oh! (*Seems to weep.*)

Pap. You see, Sire.

O. Wild. Your kind concern at the misfortunes of my family calls for the most grateful acknowledgement.

Pap. Dis is great misfortunes, fans doute.

Y. Wild. But if you, a stranger, are thus affected, what must a father feel?

Pap. Oh, beaucoup great deal more.

O. Wild. But since the evil is without a remedy, let us know the worst at once. Well, Sir, at Abington.

Pap. Yes, at Abington.

O. Wild. In the county of Berks.

Pap. Dat is right, in de county of Berks.

Y. Wild. Oh, ho!

O. Wild. Ah, Jack, Jack, are all my hopes then——Though I dread to ask, yet it must be known; who is the girl, pray Sir?

Pap. De girl, Sir—[*Aside to Young Wilding.*] Who shall I say?

Y. Wild. Any body.

Pap. For de girl, I can't say upon my vard.

O. Wild. Her condition?

Pap. Pas grande condition; dat is to be sure. But dere is no help.—[*Aside to Young Wilding.*] Sir, I am quite aground.

O. Wild. Yes; I read my shame in his reserve; some artful hussy?

Pap. Dat may be. Vat you call hussy?

O. Wild. Or perhaps some common creature! But I'm prepar'd to hear the worst.

F

Pap.

Pap. Have you no mercy ?

Y. Wild. I'll step to your relief, Sir.

Pap. O Lord ! a happy deliverance.

Y. Wild. Though it is almost death for me to speak, yet it would be infamous to let the reputation of that lady suffer by my silence : She is, Sir, of an ancient house and unblemish'd character.

O. Wild. That is something.

Y. Wild. And though her fortune may not be equal to the warm wishes of a fond father, yet——

O. Wild. Her name ?

Y. Wild. Miss Lydia Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Sybthorp.——I never heard of that name. But proceed.

Y. Wild. The latter end of last long vacation, I went with Sir James Elliot to pass a few days at a new perchase of his near Abington. There at an assembly it was my chance to meet and dance with this lady.

O. Wild. Is she handsome ?

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir, more beautiful——

O. Wild. Nay, no raptures ; but go on.

Y. Wild. But to her beauty she adds politeness, affability, and discretion ; unless she forfeited that character by fixing her affection on me.

O. Wilding. Modestly observed.

Y. Wild. I was deterr'd from a public declaration of my passion, dreading the scantiness of her fortune would prove an objection to you. Some private interviews she permitted.

O. Wild. Was that so decent ?——But love and prudence, madness and reason.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. One fatal evening, the twentieth of September, if I mistake not, we were in a retir'd room, innocently exchanging mutual vows, when her father, whom we expected to sup abroad, came suddenly upon us. I had just time to conceal myself in a closet.

O. Wild. What, unobserved by him?

Y. Wild. Entirely. But, as my ill stars would have it, a cat of whom my wife is vastly fond, had a few days before lodged a litter of kittens in the same place: I unhappily trod upon one of the brood, which so provok'd the implacable mother, that she flew at me with the fury of a tyger.

O. Wild. I have observed those creatures very fierce in defence of their young.

Pap. I shall hate a cat as long as I live.

Y. Wild. The noise rous'd the old gentleman's attention; he opened the door, and there discover'd your son.

Pap. Unlucky.

Y. Wild. I rush'd to the door; but fatally my foot slipt at the top of the stairs, and down I came tumbling to the bottom; the pistol in my hand went off by accident: this alarm'd her three brothers in the parlour, who, with all their servants, rush'd with united force upon me.

O. Wild. And so surpriz'd you?

Y. Wild. No, Sir; with my sword I for some time made a gallant defence, and should have inevitably escap'd, but a raw-bon'd, over-grown, clumsy cook-wench, struck at my sword with a kitchen poker, broke it in two, and compell'd me to surrender at discretion; the consequence of which is obvious enough.

O. Wild. Natural. The lady's reputation, your condition, her beauty, your love, all combin'd to make marriage an unavoidable measure.

Y. Wild. May I hope then you rather think me unfortunate than culpable?

O. Wild. Why your situation is a sufficient excuse: all I blame you for is your keeping it a secret from me. With Miss Grantam I shall make an awkward figure: but the best apology is the truth: I'll hasten and explain it to her all——
Oh, Jack, Jack, this is a mortifying business.

Y. Wild. Most melancholy.

[*Exit Old Wilding.*]

Pap. I am amaz'd Sir, that you have so carefully conceal'd this transaction from me.

Y. Wild. Heyday! what do you believe it too?

Pap. Believe it! Why is not the story of the marriage true?

Y. Wild. Not a syllable.

Pap. And the cat, and the pistol, and the poker.

Y. Wild. All invention. And were you really taken in?

Pap. Lord, Sir, how was it possible to avoid it? Mercy on us! what a collection of circumstances have you crowded together!

Y. Wild. Genius; the mere effects of genius, Papillion. But to deceive you, who so thoroughly know me!

Pap. But to prevent that for the future, could you not just give your humble servant a hint, when you are bent upon bouncing. Besides, Sir, if you recollect your fix'd resolution to reform—

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Ay, as to matter of fancy, the mere sport and frolic of invention: but in case of necessity—why, Miss Godfrey was at stake, and I was forc'd to use all my finesse.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Two letters, Sir.

[Exit.

Pap. There are two things in my conscience my master will never want: a prompt lie and a ready excuse for telling of it.

Y. Wild. Hum! business begins to thicken upon us: a challenge from Sir James Elliot, and a rendezvous from the pretty Miss Godfrey. They shall both be observ'd, but in their order: therefore the lady first. Let me see—I have not been twenty hours in town, and I have already got a challenge, a mistress, and a wife; now if I can but get engaged in a chancery suit, I shall have my hands pretty full of employment. Come, Papillion, we have no time to be idle.

[Exeunt.

E N D of the S E C O N D A C T.

A C T



A C T III.

Miss GRANTAM and Miss GODFREY.

Miss Godfrey.

UPON my word, Miss Grantam, this is but an idle piece of curiosity : you know the man is already dispos'd of, and therefore —

M. Gr. That is true, my dear ; but there is in this affair some mystery that I must and will have explain'd.

M. God. Come, come, I know the grievance. You can't brook that this spark, though even a married man, should throw off his allegiance to you, and enter a volunteer in my service.

M. Gr. And so you take this fact for granted ?

M. God. Have I not his letter ?

M. Gr. Conceited creature !—I fancy, Miss, by your vast affection for this letter, it is the first of the kind you ever receiv'd.

M. God. Nay, my dear, why should you be piqu'd at me ? the fault is none of mine ; I dropt no handkerchief ; I threw out no lure : the bird came willing to hand, you know.

M. Gr. Metaphorical too ! what, you are setting up for a wit as well as a belle ! why really, Madam, to do you justice, you have full as fine pretensions to one as the other.

M. God. I fancy, Madam, the world will not form their judgment of either from the report of a disappointed rival.

M. Gr.

M. Gr. Rival ! admirably rally'd !—But, let me tell you, Madam, this sort of behaviour, Madam, at your own house, whatever may be your beauty, is no great proof of your breeding, Madam.

M. God. As to that, Ma'am, I hope I shall always shew a proper resentment to any insult that is offer'd me, let it be in whose house it will. The assignation, Ma'am, both time and place, was of your own contriving.

M. Gr. Mighty well, Ma'am !

M. God. But if, dreading a mortification, you think proper to alter your plan, your chair, I believe, is in waiting.

M. Gr. It is, Madam ! then let it wait—Oh, what that was your scheme ! but it won't take, Miss : the contrivance is a little too shallow.

M. God. I don't understand you.

M. Gr. Cunning creature ! So all this insolence was concerted, it seems ; a plot to drive me out of the house, that you might have the fellow all to yourself : but I have a regard for your character, though you neglect it. Fie, Miss ! a passion for a married man ! I really blush for you.

M. God. And I most sincerely pity you. But curb your choler a little : the enquiry you are about to make requires rather a cooler disposition of mind ; and by this time the hero is at hand.

M. Gr. Mighty well ; I am prepar'd. But, Miss Godfrey, if you really wish to be acquitted of all artificial underhand dealings, in this affair, suffer me in your name to manage the interview.

M. God. Most willingly. But he will recollect your voice.

M. Gr.

M. Gr. Oh, that is easily alter'd. [*Enter a Maid, who whispers Miss Grantam, and exit.*] It is he, but hide yourself, Miss, if you please.

M. God. Your hood a little forwarder, Miss: you may be known, and then we shall have the language of politeness inflam'd to proofs of a violent passion.

M. Gr. You are prodigiously cautious.

Enter YOUNG WILDING.

Y. Wild. This rendezvous is something in the Spanish taste, imported, I suppose, with the guittar. At present, I presume, the custom is confin'd to the great; but it will descend, and in a couple of months I shall not be surpriz'd to hear an attorney's hackney clerk rousing at midnight, a millener's 'prentice, with an "Ally, Ally Croker." But that, if I mistake not, is the temple; and see my goddess herself. Miss Godfrey!

M. Gr. Hush.

Y. Wild. Am I right, Miss?

M. Gr. Softly. You receiv'd my letter, I see, Sir.

Y. Wild. And flew to the appointment with more——

M. Gr. No raptures, I beg. But you must not suppose this meeting meant to encourage your hopes.

Y. Wild. How, Madam!

M. Gr. Oh, by no means, Sir; for tho' I own your figure is pleasing, and your conversation——

M. God. Hold, Miss; when did I ever converse with him?

M. Gr. Why, did not you see him in the Park?

M. God.

M. God. True, Madam : but the conversation was with you.

M. Gr. Bless me ! you are very difficult, I say, Sir, though your person may be unexceptionable, yet your character——

Y. Wild. My character !

M. Gr. Come, come, you are better known than you imagine.

Y. Wild. I hope not.

M. Gr. Your name is Wilding.

Y. Wild. How the deuce came she by that ! True, Madam.

M. Gr. Pray have you never heard of Miss Grantam ?

Y. Wild. Frequently.

M. Gr. You have. And had you never any favourable thoughts of that lady ? Now mind, Miss.

Y. Wild. If you mean as a lover, never. The lady did me the honour to have a small design upon me.

M. God. I hear every word, Miss.

M. Gr. But you need not lean so heavy upon me ; he speaks loud enough to be heard.——I have been told, Sir, that——

Y. Wild. Yes, Ma'am, and very likely by the lady herself.

M. Gr. Sir !

Y. Wild. Oh, Madam, I have another obligation in my pocket to Miss Grantam, which must be discharg'd in the morning.

M. Gr. Of what kind ?

Y. Wild. Why the lady, finding an old humble servant of her's a little lethargic, has thought fit to administer me in a jealous draught, in order to quicken his passion.

M. Gr. Sir, let me tell you——

G

M. God.

M. God. Have a care ; you will betray yourself.

Y. Wild. Oh, the whole story will afford you infinite diversion : such a farago of fights and feasts. But, upon my honour, the girl has a fertile invention.

M. God. So ! what that story was your's was it ?

Y. Wild. Pray, Madam, don't I hear another voice ?

M. Gr. A distant relation of mine.—Every syllable false.—But, Sir, we have another charge against you. Do you know any thing of a lady at Abington ?

Y. Wild. Miss Grantam again. Yes, Madam, I have some knowledge of that lady.

M. Gr. You have ! Well, Sir, and that being the case, how could you have the assurance——

Y. Wild. A moment's patience, Ma'am. That lady, that Berkshire lady, will, I can assure you, prove no bar to my hopes.

M. Gr. How, Sir, no bar ?

Y. Wild. Not in the least, Ma'am ; for that lady exists in idea only.

M. Gr. No such person !

Y. Wild. A meer creature of the imagination.

M. Gr. Indeed ?

Y. Wild. The attacks of Miss Grantam were so powerfully enforc'd too by paternal authority, that I had no method of avoiding the blow, but by sheltering myself under the conjugal shield.

M. Gr. You are not marry'd then ?—But what credit can I give to the professions of a man, who, in an article of such importance, and to a person of such respect——

Y. Wild,

Y. Wild. Nay, Madam, surely Miss Godfrey should not accuse me of a crime her own charms have occasion'd. Could any other motive but the fear of losing her prevail on me to trifle with a father, or compel me to infringe those laws which I have hitherto so invariably observ'd?

M. Gr. What laws, Sir?

Y. Wild. The sacred laws of truth, Ma'am.

M. Gr. There, indeed you did yourself an infinite violence. But when the whole of the affair is discover'd, will it be so easy to get rid of Miss Grantam? the violence of her passion, and the old gentleman's obstinacy——

Y. Wild. Are nothing to a mind resolv'd.

M. Gr. Poor Miss Grantam!

Y. Wild. Do you know her, Madam?

M. Gr. I have heard of her: but you, Sir, I suppose, have been long on an intimate footing?

Y. Wild. Bred up together from children.

M. Gr. Brave!—Is she handsome?

Y. Wild. Her paint comes from Paris, and her femme de chambre is an excellent artist.

M. Gr. Very well—Her shape?

Y. Wild. Pray, Madam, is not Curzon esteemed the best stay-maker for people inclin'd to be crooked?

M. Gr. But as to the qualities of her mind: for instance her understanding?

Y. Wild. Uncultivated.

M. Gr. Her wit?

Y. Wild. Borrow'd.

M. Gr. Her taste?

Y. Wild. Trifling?

M. Gr. And her temper?

Y. Wild. Intolerable.

M. Gr. A finish'd picture. But come these are not your real thoughts ; this is a sacrifice you think due to the vanity of our sex.

Y. Wild. My honest sentiments : and to convince you how thoroughly indifferent I am to that lady, I would, upon my veracity, as soon take a wife from the grand signior's seraglio.— Now, Ma'am, I hope you are satisfy'd

M. Gr. And you would not scruple to acknowledge this before the lady's face?

Y. Wild. The first opportunity.

M. Gr. That I will take care to provide you. Dare you meet me at her house?

Y. Wild. When?

M. Gr. In half an hour.

Y. Wild. But won't a declaration of this sort appear odd at——a——

M. Gr. Come, no evasion ; your conduct and character seem to me a little equivocal, and I must insist on this proof, at least of——

Y. Wild. You shall have it.

M. Gr. In half an hour.

Y. Wild. This instant.

M. Gr. Be punctual.

Y. Wild. Or may I forfeit your favour.

M. Gr. Very well : till then, Sir, adieu.—

Now I think I have my spark in the toil ; and if the fellow has any feeling, if I don't make him smart for every article——Come, my dear, I shall stand in need of your aid. [Exeunt.

Y. Wild. So ! I am now, I think, arriv'd at a critical period. If I can but weather this point——But why should I doubt it ? it is in the day of distress only that a great man displays his abilities. But I shall want Papillion : where can the puppy be?

Enter

Enter PAPILLION.

Y. Wild. So, Sir ; where have you been rambling ?

Pap. I did not suppose you would want——

Y. Wild. Want !—you are always out of the way : Here have I been forc'd to tell forty lies upon my own credit, and not a single soul to vouch for the truth of them.

Pap. Lord, Sir, you know——

Y. Wild. Don't plague me with your apologies ; but it is lucky for you that I want your assistance. Come with me to Miss Grantam's.

Pap. On what occasion ?

Y. Wild. An important one : but I'll prepare you as we walk.

Pap. Sir, I am really——I could wish you would be so good as to——

Y. Wild. What, desert your friend in the heat of battle ! oh, you poltroon !

Pap. Sir, I would do any thing, but you know I have not talents

Y. Wild. I do, and for my own sake shall not task them too high.

Pap. Now I suppose the hour is come when we shall pay for all.

Y. Wild. Why, what a dastardly, hen-hearted——But come, Papillion, this shall be your last campaign. Don't droop, man ; confide in your leader, and remember, Sub auspice Teucro nil desperandum.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE

SCENE a Room.

Enter a SERVANT, conducting in OLD WILDING.

Serv. My lady, Sir, will be at home immediately. Sir James Elliot is in the next room waiting her return.

O. Wild. Pray, honest friend, will you tell Sir James that I beg the favour of a word with him.
[*Exit Servant.*] This unthinking boy! Half the purpose of my life has been to plan this scheme for his happiness, and in one heedless hour has he mangled all.

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir, I ask your pardon: but upon so interesting a subject, I know you will excuse my intrusion. Pray, Sir, of what credit is the family of the Sybthorps in Berkshire?

Sir Ja. Sir!

O. Wild. I don't mean as to property; that I am not so solicitous about; but as to their character: Do they live in reputation? Are they respected in the neighbourhood?

Sir Ja. The family of the Sybthorps!

O. Wild. Of the Sybthorps.

O. Wild. Really I don't know, Sir.

O. Wild. Not know!

Sir Ja. No; it is the very first time I ever heard of the name.

O. Wild. How steadily he denies it! Well done, baronet! I find Jack's account was a just one. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir James, recollect yourself.

Sir Ja.

Sir Ja. It will be to no purpose.

O. Wild. Come, Sir, your motive for this affected ignorance is a generous, but unnecessary proof of your friendship for my son: but I know the whole affair.

Sir Ja. What affair?

O. Wild. Jack's marriage.

Sir Ja. What Jack?

O. Wild. My son Jack.

Sir Ja. Is he marry'd?

O. Wild. Is he marry'd! why you know he is.

Sir. Ja. Not I, upon my honour.

O. Wild. Nay, that is going a little too far: but to remove all your scruples at once, he has own'd it himself.

Sir Ja. He has.

O. Wild. Ay, ay, to me. Every circumstance; going to your new purchase at Abington—meeting Lydia Sybthorp at the assembly—their private interviews—surpriz'd by the father—pistol—poker—and marriage; in short, every particular.

Sir Ja. And this account you had from your son?

O. Wild. From Jack; not two hours ago.

Sir Ja. I wish you joy, Sir.

O. Wild. Not much of that, I believe.

Sir Ja. Why, Sir, does the marriage displease you?

O. Wild. Doubtless.

Sir Ja. Then I fancy you may make yourself easy.

O. Wild. Why so?

Si. Ja. You have got, Sir, the most prudent daughter-in-law in the British dominions.

O. Wild. I am happy to hear it.

Sir Ja.

Sir Ja. For though she mayn't have brought you much, I'm sure she will not cost you a farthing.

O. Wild. Ay; exactly Jack's account.

Sir Ja. She'll be easily jointur'd.

O. Wild. Justice shall be done her.

Sir Ja. No provision necessary for younger children.

O. Wild. No Sir! why not?—I can tell you, if she answers your account, not the daughter of a duke—

Sir Ja. Ha, ha, ha, ha.

O. Wild. You are very merry, Sir.

Sir Ja. What an unaccountable fellow!

O. Wild. Sir!

Sir Ja. I beg your pardon, Sir. But with regard to this marriage—

O. Wild. Well, Sir.

Sir Ja. I take the whole history to be neither more nor less than absolute fable.

O. Wild. How, Sir!

Sir Ja. Even so.

O. Wild. Why, Sir, do you think my son would dare to impose upon me?

Sir Ja. Sir, he would dare to impose upon any body. Don't I know him?

O. Wild. What do you know?

Sir Ja. I know, Sir, that his narratives gain him more applause than credit; and that, whether from constitution or habit, there is no believing a syllable he says.

O. Wild. Oh, mighty well, Sir!—He wants to turn the tables upon Jack.—But it won't do; you are forestall'd; your novels won't pass upon me.

Sir Ja. Sir!

O. Wild. Nor is the character of my son to be blasted with the breath of a bouncer.

Sir Ja.

Sir Ja. What is this?

O. Wild. No, no, Mr. Mandeville, it won't do ; you are as well known here as in your own county of Hereford.

Sir Ja. Mr. Wilding, but that I am sure this extravagant behaviour owes its rise to some impudent impositions of your son, your age would scarce prove your protection.

O. Wild. Nor, Sir, but that I know my boy equal to the defence of his own honour, should he want a protector in this arm, wither'd and impotent as you may think it.

Enter Miss GRANTAM.

M. Gr. Bless me, Gentlemen, what is the meaning of this ?

Sir Ja. No more, at present, Sir : I have another demand upon your son ; we'll settle the whole together.

O. Wild. I am sure he will do you justice.

M. Gr. How, Sir James Elliot, I flatter'd myself that you had finish'd your visits here, Sir. Must I be the eternal object of your outrage ? not only insulted in my own person, but in that of my friends ! Pray, Sir, what right——

O. Wild. Madam, I ask your pardon ; a disagreeable occasion brought me here : I come, Madam, to renounce all hopes of being nearer ally'd to you, my son unfortunately being marry'd already.

M. Gr. Marry'd !

Sir Ja. Yes, Madam, to a lady in the clouds ; and because I have refus'd to acknowledge her family, this old gentleman has behav'd in a manner very inconsistent with his usual politeness.

H

O. Wild.

O. Wild. Sir, I thought this affair was to be reserv'd for another occasion; but you, it seems—

M. Gr. Oh, is that the business?—Why, I begin to be afraid we are here a little in the wrong, Mr. Wilding.

O. Wild. Madam.

M. Gr. Your son has just confirm'd Sir James Elliot's opinion, at a conference under Miss Godfrey's window.

O. Wild. Is it possible?

M. Gr. Most true; and assign'd two most whimsical motives for the unaccountable tale.

O. Wild. What can they be?

M. Gr. An aversion for me, whom he has seen but once, and an affection for Miss Godfrey, whom I am almost sure he never saw in his life.

C. Wild. You amaze me.

M. Gr. Indeed, Mr. Wilding, your son is a most extraordinary youth; he has finely perplex'd us all. I think, Sir James, you have a small obligation to him.

Sir Ja. Which I shall take care to acknowledge the first opportunity.

O. Wild. You have my consent. An abandoned profligate! was his father a proper subject for his——But I discard him.

M. Gr. Nay, now, Gentlemen, you are rather too warm: I can't think Mr. Wilding bad-hearted at the bottom. This is a levity——

O. Wild. How, Madam! a levity!

M. Gr. Take my word for it, no more; enflam'd into habit by the approbation of his juvenile friends. Will you submit his punishment to me? I think I have the means in my hands, both to satisfy your resentments, and accomplish his cure into the bargain.

Sir Ja.

Sir Ja. I have no quarrel to him, but for the ill offices he has done me with you.

M. Gr. D'ye hear, Mr. Wilding? I am afraid my opinion with Sir James must cement the general peace

O. Wild. Madam, I submit to any—

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. Mr. Wilding to wait upon you, Madam. [Exit.]

M. Gr. He is punctual, I find. Come, good folks, you all act under my direction. You, Sir, will get from your son, by what means you think fit, the real truth of the Abington business. You must likewise seemingly consent to his marriage with Miss Godfrey, who I shrewdly suspect he has by some odd accident mistaken for me: the lady herself shall appear at your call. Come, Sir James, you will withdraw. I intend to produce another performer, who will want a little instruction. Kitty.

Enter KITTY.

Let John shew Mr. Wilding in to his father; then come to my dressing room: I have a short scene to give you in study. [Exit Kitty.] The girl is lively, and I warrant will do her character justice. Come, Sir James. Nay, no ceremony: we must be as busy as bees. [Exeunt.]

O. Wild. This strange boy!—But I must command my temper.

T. Wild. [speaking as he enters.] People to speak with me! See what they want, Papillion.—My father here! that's unlucky enough.

O. Wild. Ha, Jack ! what brings you here ?

Y. Wild. Why, I thought it my duty to wait upon Miss Grantam, in order to make her some apology for the late unfortunate——

O. Wild. Well now, that is prudently, as well as politely done.

Y. Wild. I am happy to meet, Sir, with your approbation.

O. Wild. I have been thinking, Jack, about my daughter-in-law : as the affair is public, it is not decent to let her continue longer at her father's.

Y. Wild. Sir !

O. Wild. Would it be right to send for her home ?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. I think so. Why then to-morrow my chariot shall fetch her.

Y. Wild. The devil it shall ! [*Aside.*] Not quite so soon, if you please, Sir.

O. Wild. No ! why not ?

Y. Wild. The journey may be dangerous in her present condition.

O. Wild. What's the matter with her ?

Y. Wild. She is big with child, Sir.

O. Wild. An audacious——Big with child ! that is fortunate. But, however, an easy carriage, and short stages can't hurt her.

Y. Wild. Pardon me, Sir, I dare not trust her : she is six months gone.

O. Wild. Nay, then, there may be danger indeed. But should I write to her father, just to let him know that you have discovered the secret.

Y. Wild. By all means, Sir, it will make him extremely happy.

O. Wild.

O. *Wild.* Why then I will instantly about it, pray how do you direct to him ?

Y. *Wild.* Abington, Berkshire.

O. *Wild.* True ; but his address ?

Y. *Wild.* You need not trouble yourself, Sir : I shall write by this post to my wife, and will send your letter inclos'd.

O. *Wild.* Ay, ay, that will do. [Going.]

Y. *Wild.* So, I have parry'd that thrust.

O. *Wild.* Though upon second thoughts, Jack, that will rather look too familiar for an introductory letter.

Y. *Wild.* Sir !

O. *Wild.* And these country gentlemen are full of punctillios——No, I'll send him a letter apart ; so give me his direction.

Y. *Wild.* You have it, Sir.

O. *Wild.* Ay, but his name : I have been so hurry'd that I have entirely forgot it.

Y. *Wild.* I am sure so have I. [Aside.] His name—his name, Sir—Hopkins.

O. *Wild.* Hopkins !

Y. *Wild.* Yes, Sir.

O. *Wild.* That is not the same name that you gave me before : that, if I recollect, was either Sypthorpe, or Sybthorpe.

Y. *Wild.* You are right, Sir : that is his paternal appellation ; but the name of Hopkins he took for an estate of his mother's : so he is indiscriminately called Hopkins or Sybthorpe ; and now I recollect I have his letter in my pocket—he signs himself Sybthorpe Hopkins.

O. *Wild.* There is no end of this : I must stop him at once. Harkye, Sir, I think you are call'd my son.

Y. *Wild.* I hope, Sir, you have no reason to doubt it.

O. *Wild.*

O. Wild. And look upon yourself as a gentleman?

X. Wild. In having the honour of descending from you.

O. Wild. And that you think a sufficient pretension?

X. Wild. Sir—pray, Sir—

O. Wild. And by what means do you imagine your ancestors obtain'd that distinguishing title? By their pre-eminence in virtue, I suppose.

X. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. And has it never occur'd to you, that what was gain'd by honour might be lost by infamy?

X. Wild. Perfectly, Sir.

O. Wild. Are you to learn what redress even the imputation of a lye demands, and that nothing less than the life of the adversary can extinguish the affront.

X. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. Then how dare you call yourself a gentleman? you, whose whole life has been one continued scene of fraud and falsity! And would nothing content you but making me a partner in your infamy? not satisfied with violating the great band of society, mutual confidence, the most sacred rights of nature must be invaded, and your father made the innocent instrument to circulate your abominable impositions!

X. Wild. But, Sir!

O. Wild. Within this hour my life was near sacrific'd in defence of your fame: but perhaps that was your intention, and the story of your marriage merely calculated to send me out of the world, as a grateful return for my bringing you into it.

X. Wild.

Y. Wild. For heaven's sake, Sir.

O. Wild. What other motive?

Y. Wild. Hear me, I intreat you, Sir.

O. Wild. To be again impos'd on! no, Jack, my eyes are open'd at last.

Y. Wild. By all that's sacred, Sir——

O. Wild. I am now deaf to your delusions.

Y. Wild. But hear me, Sir, I own the Abington business——

O. Wild. An absolute fiction?

Y. Wild. I do.

O. Wild. And how dare you——

Y. Wild. I crave but a moment's audience.

O. Wild. Go on.

Y. Wild. Previous to the communication of your intention for me, I accidentally met with a lady whose charms——

O. Wild. So! what here is another marriage trumped out: but that is a stale device. And pray, Sir, what place does this lady inhabit? Come, come, go on; you have a fertile invention, and this is a fine opportunity. Well, Sir, and this charming lady, residing, I suppose, in Nubibus——

Y. Wild. No, Sir; in London.

O. Wild. Indeed.

Y. Wild. Nay, more, and at this instant in this house.

O. Wild. And her name——

Y. Wild. Godfrey,

O. Wild. The friend of Miss Grantam?

Y. The very same, Sir.

O. Wild. Have you spoke to her?

Y. Wild. Parted from her not ten minutes ago, nay, am here by her appointment.

O. Wild. Has she favour'd your address?

Y. Wild. Time, Sir, and your approbation, will, I hope.

O. Wild.

O. Wild. Lookye, Sir ; as there is some little probability in this story, I shall think it worth farther enquiry. To be plain with you, I know Miss Godfrey ; am intimate with her family ; and though you deserve but little from me, I will endeavour to aid your intention. But if in the progress of this affair, you practise any of your usual arts ; if I discover the least falshood, the least duplicity, remember you have lost a father.

Y. Wild. I shall submit without a murmur.

[*Exit Old Wilding.*

Enter PAPILLION.

Y. Wild. Well, Papillion.

Pap. Sir, here has been the devil to pay within.

Y. Wild. What's the matter ?

Pap. A whole legion of cooks, confectioners, musicians, waiters, and watermen.

Y. Wild. What do they want ?

Pap. You, Sir.

Y. Wild. Me !

Pap. Yes, Sir ; they have brought in their bills.

Y. Wild. Bills ! for what ?

Pap. For the entertainment you gave last night upon the water.

Y. Wild. That I gave !

Pap. Yes, Sir ; you remember the bill of fare : I am sure the very mention of it makes my mouth water

Y. Wild. Prithee are you mad ? There must be some mistake ; you know that I—

Pap. They have been vastly puzzled to find out your lodgings : but Mr. Robinson meeting by accident with Sir James Elliot, he was kind enough to tell him where you liv'd. Here are the bills : Almack's, twelve dozen of claret, ditto Champagne,

Champagne, Frontiniac, sweatmeats, pine-apples: the whole amount is 372l. 9s. besides music and fireworks.

Y. Wild. Come, Sir, this is no time for trifling.

Pap. Nay, Sir, they say they have gone full as low as they can afford; and they were in hopes, from the great satisfaction you express'd to Sir James Elliot, that you would throw them in an additional compliment.

Y. Wild. Harkye, Mr. Papillion, if you don't cease your impertinence, I shall pay you a compliment that you would gladly excuse.

Pap. Upon my faith I relate but the mere matter of fact. You know, Sir, I am but bad at invention; tho' this incident I can't help thinking is the natural fruit of your happy one.

Y. Wild. But are you serious? is this possible?

Pap. Most certain. It was with difficulty I restrain'd their impatience; but however I have dispatch'd them to your lodgings, with a promise that you shall immediately meet them.

Y. Wild. Oh, there we shall soon rid our hands of the troop.—Now, Papillion, I have news for you. My father has got to the bottom of the whole Abington business.

Pap. The deuce!

Y. Wild. We parted this moment. Such a scene!

Pap. And what was the issue?

Y. Wild. Happy beyond my hopes. Not only an act of oblivion, but a promise to plead my cause with the fair.

Pap. With Miss Godfrey?

Y. Wild. Who else? He is now with her in another room.

Pap. And there is no—you understand me—in all this?

I

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. No, no; that is all over now—my reformation is fix'd.

Pap. As a weather-cock.

Y. Wild. Here comes my father.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Well, Sir, I find in this last article you have condescended to tell me the truth: the young lady is not averse to your union; but in order to fix so mutable a mind, I have drawn up a slight contract, which you are both to sign.

Y. Wild. With transport.

O. Wild. I will introduce Miss Godfrey. [*Exit.*

Y. Wild. Did not I tell you, Papillion?

Pap. This is amazing, indeed.

Y. Wild. Am not I a happy fortunate?—But they come.

Enter OLD WILDING, and Miss GODFREY.

O. Wild. If, Madam, he has not the highest sense of the great honour you do him, I shall cease to regard him.—There, Sir, make your own acknowledgments to that lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. This is more than you merit; but let your future behaviour testify your gratitude.

Y. Wild. Papillion! Madam! Sir!

O. Wild. What is the puppy petrified! Why don't you go up to the lady?

Y. Wild. Up to the lady! —That lady!

O. Wild. That lady!—To be sure. What other lady?—To Miss Godfrey!

Y. Wild. That lady Miss Godfrey!

O. Wild. What is all this?—Harkye, Sir: I see what you are at: but no trifling; I'll be no more the dupe of your double detestable—Re-
collect

collect my last resolution : this instant your hand to the contract, or tremble at the consequence.

Y. Wild. Sir, that I hope is——might not I——to be sure——

O. Wild. No further evasions ! There, Sir.

Y. Wild. Heigh ho. [Signs it.

O. Wild. Very well. Now, Madam, your name if you please.

Y. Wild. Papillion, do you know who she is ?

Pap. That's a question indeed ! Don't you, Sir ?

Y. Wild. Not I, as I hope to be sav'd.

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. A young lady begs to speak with Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. With me !

M. God. A young lady with Mr. Wilding !

Serv. Seems distress'd, Madam, and extremely pressing for admittance.

M. God. Indeed ! There may be something in this ! You must permit me, Sir, to pause a little : who knows but a prior claim may prevent——

O. Wild. How, Sir, who is this lady ?

Y. Wild. It is impossible for me to divine, Sir.

O. Wild. You know nothing of her ?

Y. Wild. How should I ?

O. Wild. You hear Madam.

M. God. I presume your son can have no objection to the lady's appearance.

Y. Wild. Not in the least, Madam.

M. God. Shew her in, John. [Exit.

O. Wild. No, Madam, I do'nt think there is the least room for suspecting him : he can't be so abandon'd as to——But she is here. Upon my word a sightly woman.

Enter KITTY as Miss Sybthorpe.

Kitty. Where is he?—Oh, let me throw my arms——my life——my——

Y. Wild. Heyday!

Kitty. And could you leave me? and for so long a space? Think how the tedious time has lagg'd along.

Y. Wild. Madam!

Kitty. But we are met at last, and now we will part no more.

Y. Wild. The deuce we won't!

Kitty. What, not one kind look, no tender word to hail our second meeting!

Y. Wild. What the devil is all this;

Kitty. Are all your oaths, your protestations, come to this? have I deserv'd such treatment? Quitted my father's house, left all my friends, and wander'd here alone in search of thee, thou first, last, only object of my love.

O. Wild. To what can all this tend? Harkye, Sir, unriddle this mystery.

Y. Wild. Davus, non Œdipus sum. It is beyond me, I confess. Some lunatic escap'd from her keeper, I suppose.

Kitty. Am I disown'd then, contemn'd, slighted?

O. Wild. Hold; let me enquire into this matter a little. Pray, Madam——You seem to be pretty familiar here—Do you know this gentleman?

Kitty. Too well.

O. Wild. His name?

Kitty. Wilding.

O. Wild. So far she is right. Now yours, if you please.

Kitty. Wilding.

Omnes

Omnes. Wilding !

O. Wild. And how came you by that name pray ?

Kitty. Most lawfully, Sir : By the sacred band, the holy tie that made us one.

O. Wild. What, marry'd to him !

Kitty. Most true.

Omnes. How !

Y. Wild. Sir, may I never—

O. Wild. Peace, Monster !—One question more : Your maiden name ?

Kitty. Sybthorpe.

O. Wild. Lydia, from Abington, in the county of Berks ?

Kitty. The same.

O. Wild. As I suspected. So then the whole story is true, and the monster is marry'd at last.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir ! By all that's—

O. Wild. Eternal dumbness seize the, measureless lyar !

Y. Wild. If not me, hear this gentleman—
Marquis—

Pap. Not I ; I'll be drawn into none of your scrapes : it is a pit of your own digging, and so get out as well as you can. Mean time I'll shift for myself. [Exit.

O. Wild. What evasion now, Monster ?

M. God. Deceiver !

O. Wild. Lyar !

M. God. Impostor !

Y. Wild. Why, this is a general combination to distract me ; but I will be heard. Sir, you are grossly impos'd upon : the low contriver of this woman's shallow artifice I shall soon find means to discover : and as to you, Madam, with whom I have been suddenly surpriz'd into a contract, I most solemnly declare this is the first time I ever set eyes on you.

O. Wild.

O. Wild. Amazing confidence! Did not bring her at your request?

Y. Wild. No.

M. God. Is not this your own letter?

Y. Wild. No.

Kitty. Am not I your wife?

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Did not you own it to me?

Y. Wild. Yes—that is—no, no.

Kitty. Hear me.

Y. Wild. No.

M. God. Answer me.

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Have not I——

Y. Wild. No, no, no. Zounds you are all mad, and if I stay I shall catch the infection. [Exit.

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT and Miss GRANTAM.

Omnes. Ha! ha, ! ha !

M. Gr. Finely perform'd.

O. Wild. You have kept your promise, and I thank you, Madam.

M. Gr. My medicine was somewhat rough, Sir; but in desperate cases, you know——

O. Wild. If his cure is compleated, he will gratefully acknowledge the cause; if not, the punishment comes far short of his crimes. It is needless to pay you any compliments, Sir James; with that Lady you can't fail to be happy. I shan't venture to hint a scheme I have greatly at heart, till we have undeniable proofs of the success of our operations. To the ladies, indeed, no character is so dangerous as that of a lyar.

They in the fairest fames can fix a flaw,
And vanquish females whom they never saw.

E P I-



EPILOGUE.

Between Miss GRANTAM and OLD WILDING.

By a Man of Fashion.

M. Gr. *H*O L D, Sir.

*Our plot concluded, and strict justice done,
Let me be heard as council for your son.*

Acquit I can't, I mean to mitigate :

*Proscribe all lying, what would be the fate
Of this and every other earthly state ?*

Consider, Sir, if once you cry it down,

You'll shut up ev'ry coffee-house in town :

The tribe of politicians will want food :

Ev'n now half famish'd--for the public good.

All Grub-street murderers of men and sense,

And every Office of intelligence,

All would be Bankrupts, the whole lying race,

And no Gazette to publish their disgrace.

O. Wild. *Too mild a sentence, must the good and great
Patriots be wronged, that booksellers may eat ?*

M. Gr. *Your patience, Sir : yet hear another word.*

Turn to the hall where justice weilds her sword :

Think in what narrow limits you would draw,

By this Proscription, all the sons of law :

For 'tis the fix'd, determin'd rule of courts,

Vyner will tell you, nay, ev'n Coke's Reports,

All pleaders may, when difficulties rise,

To gain one truth, expend a hundred lyes.

O. Wild. *To curb this practice I am somewhat loath :*

A lawyer has no credit but an oath.

M. Gr.

E P I L O G U E.

M. Gr. *Then to the softer sex some favour shew :
Leave no possession of our modest No !*

O. Wild. *Oh, freely Ma'am we'll that allowance give,
So that two Noes be held affirmative.
Provided ever that your pish and fie,
On all occasions should be deem'd a lye.*

M. Gr. *Hard terms !
On this rejoinder then I rest my cause :
Should all pay homage to Truth's sacred laws,
Let us examine what would be the case :
Why many a great man would be out of place.*

O. Wild. *'Twould many a virtuous character restore.*

M. Gr. *But take a character from many more.*

O. Wild. *Tho' on the side of bad the balance fall,
Better to find few good than fear for all.*

M. Gr. *Strong are your reasons : yet, ere I submit,
I mean to take the voices of the pit.
Is it your pleasures that we make a rule,
That ev'ry liar be proclaim'd a fool,
Fit subjects for our author's ridicule ?*



F I N I S.



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}



F I N I S.

Foote, Samuel

The Lyar

London 1786

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